

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW

Exhibits and/or Demonstrations

None

Identification of Claims Discussed

Claims 1

Identification of Prior Art Discussed

Shirono (US 5,730,995), Yeh (US 5,624,116) and Yasui (US 5,960,578).

Proposed Amendments

Applicant proposed adding recitation of closed pores to the grip structure and reciting product-by-process limitations.

Principal Arguments and Other Matters

Applicant argued that Shirono should not have properly been applied toward obviousness of Applicant's grip because Shirono explicitly teaches away from using a powdery antimicrobial agent, which is what Applicant uses. Applicant also disagreed with Examiner's characterization that the pellets described in Yasui are powders. Applicant pointed out that Yasui specifies that the pellets contain only about 10% by weight of an inorganic antimicrobial agent, whereas the antimicrobial powder used by Applicant is the inorganic antimicrobial agent itself—i.e., the powder is 100% by weight inorganic antimicrobial agent.

Applicant also pointed out that the present application discloses the combination of a known powdery antimicrobial agent with Applicant's known grip structure to provide an antimicrobial grip with all of the advantages of Applicant's shock-absorbing grip plus the long-lasting antimicrobial property. There is no teaching or suggestion to make this combination in any of the prior art references of record, and as mentioned, Shirono teaches away from such a combination.

To add a structural limitation produced by Applicant's method of coagulating urethanes on the textile layer, Applicant proposed adding closed pores (which form as a result of Applicant's process). Application also discussed product-by-process type claims.

Results of Interview

Examiner Blau agreed to consider Applicant's added closed pore limitation and product-by-process claims.